

Message Text

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51

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 BIB-01 PRS-01 L-02 AID-05 EB-07 COME-00

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R 061230Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA BAHRAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC 1756

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MANAMA 0016

FOR NEA/ARP

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS : BBIS, BA, US

SUBJECT : RTV - BAHRAIN

REF : MANAMA'S 0003

1. RTV ISSUE WENT PUBLIC JANUARY 5 WITH PUBLICATION FOLLOWING
FRONT PAGE ARTICLE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE GULF MIRROR:

2. QTE

THE GULF'S ONLY INDEPENDENT NON-GOVERNMENTAL TELEVISION STATION,
RTV BAHRAIN, IS FACING FINANCIAL PROBLEMS, IT EMERGED, ON SATURDAY.
BUT THE BAHRAIN GOVERNMENT DENIED
THAT ANY AGREEMENT HAD BEEN MADE
FOR THE TAKE-OVER OF THE STATION.

MINISTER OF INFORMATION TARIQ AL-MOAYYED, IN AN EXCLUSIVE INTER-
VIEW WITH THE GULF MIRROR ON SATURDAY MORNING, DESCRIBED AS
"SCIENCE-FICTION" REPORTS IN SEVERAL REGIONAL PAPERS ABOUT AN
AGREEMENT HAVING BEEN SIGNED WITH RTV AND THE MENTION OF A FIGURE
OF BD. 6 MILLION TO COVER THE COST OF A TAKE-OVER.

"I DENY CATEGORICALLY THAT THERE HAS BEEN ANY AGREEMENT WHATSOEVER,"
HE STATED. HOWEVER HE AGREED THAT THE COMPANY HAD TOLD HIM ABOUT
IT'S FINANCIAL PROBLEMS. THE MINISTER WENT ON TO ADD THAT FURTHER

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TALKS COULD TAKE PLACE IN ORDER FOR FULL OWNERSHIP TO BE TAKEN BY

THE GOVERNMENT.

INFORMED GOVERNMENT SOURCES INDICATE THAT RTV HAS HAD A FINANCIAL PROBLEM, AND THEY SAY THAT THE COMPANY HAS ASKED THE GOVERNMENT EITHER TO INCREASE ITS 20 PER CENT PARTICIPATION IN THE STATION OR TO OFFER A LOAN. THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION HAS REPORTEDLY TURNED THEM DOWN ON BOTH COUNTS.

THE CHAIRMAN OF RTV'S HOLDING COMPANY, MR. MAURICE KHOURY, FLEW IN TO BAHRAIN SATURDAY NIGHT FOR "DISCUSSIONS" A COMPANY SPOKESMAN SAID, BUT HE COULD NOT COMMENT FURTHER WITHOUT CONTACTING MR. KHOURY IN PERSON. MR. KHOURY HAS MADE A NUMBER OF TRIPS IN THE LAST THREE MONTHS TO THE ISLAND TO TRY AND RESOLVE RTV'S SITUATION. MR. AL-MOAYYED MADE IT CLEAR HOWEVER, THAT NO UNILATERAL ACTION WOULD BE TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OVER THE STATION. UNQUOTE
TWINAM

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